

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00

ICAE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 AID-05 PC-01 CA-01

OMB-01 TRSE-00 /068 W

-----126234 281517Z /53

O 281415Z AUG 78

FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 093

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

USCINCNAVEUR LONDON

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE

COMIDEASTFOR

C O N F I D E N T I A L NAIROBI 12885

USCINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, KE

SUBJECT: POST-KENYATTA TRANSITION

1. SIX DAYS AFTER KENYATTA'S DEATH PRESIDENT MOI APPEARS FIRMLY IN CONTROL. MOI CHAIRED CABINET MEETINGS AUGUST 23 AND 25 AND HELD MEETINGS WITH SECURITY CHIEFS AND TOP CIVIL SERVANTS. GENERAL ATMOSPHERE IN NAIROBI AND THROUGHOUT COUNTRY REMAINS TOTALLY CALM AND RELAXED.

2. DURING SPECIAL REQUIEM MASS FOR LATE PRESIDENT KENYATTA AUGUST 27, PRESIDENT MOI (ACCOMPANIED BY ATTORNEY GENERAL NJONJO) ANNOUNCED "WITH THE HELP OF GOD I WILL TRY MY BEST TO CARRY ON WITH WORK PRESIDENT JOMO KENYATTA HAD ALREADY STARTED." RECENT MOI STATEMENTS AS WELL AS MEDIA COMMENTARY HAVE EMPHASIZED CLOSE TIES BETWEEN LATE
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PRESIDENT KENYATTA AND MOI AND LATTER'S DETERMINATION TO CONTINUE KENYATTA'S POLICIES.

3. WHILE MOI AND NJONJO WENT TO CHURCH (BOTH CATHOLIC AND ANGLICAN) IN NAIROBI, POLITICALLY PROMINENT MEMBERS OF KENYATTA FAMILY FACTION ATTENDED WELL PUBLICIZED MEMORIAL MASS AT KIKUYU. AMONG THOSE PRESENT WERE MINSTATE KOINANGE,

DEFMIN JAMES GICHURU, EX-FONMIN DR. NJOROGE MUNGAI, PRESIDENT'S NEPHEW NJENGI MUIGAI AND PRESIDENT'S SON-IN-LAW UDI GECAGA.

4. LOCAL PRESS AUGUST 26 FEATURED EX-VICE PRESIDENT OGINGA ODINGA WEeping AT BODY OF KENYATTA. DAILY STANDARD (KENYATTA FAMILY CONNECTED) FRONT-PAGED PICTURE.

5. IN WHAT APPEARS GOVERNMENT INSPIRED ARTICLE (PROBABLY ATTORNEY GENERAL NJONJO) DAILY NATION HAS RUN ARTICLE ENTITLED "PRESIDENT TO BE ELECTED ACCORDING TO LAW." ASIDE FROM PRINTING ARTICLES OF CONSTITUTION RELEVANT TO ELECTION OF PRESIDENT WHEN VACANCY OCCURS, PAPER RAN ARTICLES OF PARLIAMENT GOVERNING SUCH ELECTION, WHICH DATE FROM 1969. ARTICLES STIPULATE THAT PRESIDENT SHALL DIRECT SPEAKER OF PARLIAMENT TO PUBLISH NOTICE OF ELECTIONS IN OFFICIAL GAZETTE AFTER WHICH SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS SHALL PUBLISH IN GAZETT FOLLOWING:

A) PERIOD FOR NOMINATION OF CANDIDATES SHALL NOT BE LESS THAN TEN DAYS AFTER PUBLICATIONS OF SUCH NOTICE;

B) PERIOD IN WHICH POLL IS TAKEN SHALL NOT EXCEED TEN DAYS.

6. WHILE KANU ITSELF HAS NOT YET MADE ANNOUNCEMENT REGARDING NOMINATION, WE HAVE HEARD FROM RELIABLE SOURCES THAT KANU WILL HOLD CONFERENCE TO NOMINATE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE. CONFIDENTIAL

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THIS WILL BE THE FIRST DELEGATES CONFERENCE SINCE 1966. GIVEN FACT THAT PRESIDENT MUST BE HEAD OF PARTY, KANU IS EXPECTED TO RENEW NATIONAL PARTY LEADERSHIP IN ACCORDANCE WITH KANU CONSTITUTION WHICH WAS DRAFTED IN 1974 AND UNDER WHICH PARTY HAS BEEN OPERATING FOR LAST FEW YEARS EVEN THOUGH TEXT HAS NEVER BEEN RATIFIED (RATIFICATION WAS SCHEDULED FOR PARTY CONFERENCE IN 1977 WHICH WAS CANCELLED AT LAST MINUTE). ATTORNEY GENERAL SAYS PARTY WILL NOMINATE ONLY ONE CANDIDATE, ALTHOUGH IT APPEARS THAT CONSTITUTIONALLY IT COULD NOMINATE MORE. IT IS UNLIKELY THAT MOI NOMINATION WILL BE CHALLENGED SERIOUSLY AT KANU CONFERENCE BECAUSE MOST OF THE OTHER LOGICAL CONTENDERS CANNOT STAND BECAUSE THEY ARE NOT ELECTED MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT (E.G., MUNGAI, ODINGA). FURHTER, THE WINNER OF THIS ELECTION WILL ONLY SERVE AT MOST UNTIL NOV. 1979, WHEN THE CURRENT 5-YEAR PARLIAMENTARY TERM ENDS AND PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS MUST BE HELD. REGULAR PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS WILL HAVE TO BE HELD AT THE SAME TIME, SINCE KENYA'S PRESIDENT MUST ALSO BE AN ELECTED MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT. MOI MAY, OF COURSE, DISSOLVE PARLIAMENT AND CALL FOR ELECTIONS EARLIER IF HE WISHES.

7. WE HAVE BEEN RELIABLY INFORMED THAT, IF HE IS ELECTED

FOR THE INTERIM PERIOD BEFORE THE GENERAL ELECTION, MOI DOES NOT INTEND TO CARRY OUT ANY MAJOR CHANGES IN THE CABINET OR OTHER SENIOR GOVERNMENT POSITIONS. HE WANTS TO WAIT UNTIL HE HAS A FULL FIVE-YEAR MANDATE BEFORE HE ORGANIZES HIS OWN TEAM.

8. COMMENT: MOI AND NJONJO GIVE EVERY INDICATION THAT THINGS ARE GOING JUST AS PLANNED AND THAT MOI WILL BE CONFIRMED AS PRESIDENT AT THE FORTHCOMING KANU CONFERENCE. THERE IS, HOWEVER, A GOOD BIT OF FEELING IN NAIROBI THAT THE VOTERS SHOULD BE OFFERED MORE THAN ONE CHOICE--AN OPTION THAT NJONJO IS SURE TO RESIST. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE PEOPLE ARE BEGINNING TO TAKE TO MOI, AND LARGE CROWDS GATHER AND APPLAUD WHENEVER HE APPEARS. MOI IS SO FAR AVOIDING ALL TRAPPINGS
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OF THE IMPERIAL PRESIDENCY AND SEEMS TO BE MAKING A GOOD IMPRESSION AS A MAN OF THE PEOPLE.
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